

Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

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*A message from
Congressman Elijah E. Cummings*



It is both a privilege and honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue outreach efforts to further inform you of legislative action in Congress. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.

*Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress*

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Congressman Cummings Secures \$2 Million in Federal Funds for Anti-Drug Activists

Following a recent arson that tragically killed a Baltimore family known for their anti-drug efforts, Congressman Cummings contacted the White House to urge increased federal protection of similar community activists who fight neighborhood crime and drugs.

On October 16, Angela Maria Dawson, 36, along with her children, Keith and Kevin Dawson, both 9; Carnell Dawson Jr., 10; Juan Ortiz, 12; and LaWanda Ortiz, 14; died after their house was destroyed in a fire. Angela's husband, Carnell, 43, who had originally survived, died on Oct. 23 due to injuries from the fire.

Police have alleged that the fire was intentionally set by an individual who wanted to retaliate against the family for reporting neighborhood drug trafficking to law enforcement authorities.

"The Dawson family died as heroes. Despite threats of violence, they refused to let the drug dealers drive them out of their neighborhood," Congressman Cummings said. "But this horrifying tragedy left a chilling effect upon every neighborhood that faces our shared drug problem."

Congressman Cummings noted that the fatal fire led many community activists to fear whether they, too, could be the subject of drug dealers' intimidation, as has been alleged in the Dawson family arson-murder.

For that reason, Congressman Cummings immediately met with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy Director John P. Walters about increasing police protection.

The meeting resulted in Director Walters making a commitment to immediately redirect \$2 million in funding resources that are already allocated within the current budget of the Washington-Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program (HIDTA). These funds will allow Baltimore City to better protect specified high-crime neighborhoods in Baltimore City, pay the cost of additional police foot patrols, increase police overtime pay and provide for lighting.

"I am convinced that Baltimore City Mayor Martin O'Malley, Police Commissioner Edward T. Norris and the Baltimore City police are doing the best that they can with the resources that are currently available," Congressman Cummings said.

He added, "The statistics that the Mayor quotes about the increased rate of reduction in violent crime and decreased, drug-related emergency room visits in Baltimore are real numbers and represent real progress. Nevertheless, I believe that the federal role in community protection must be increased."

Congressman Cummings noted that this action was only the first step in a more expanded, longer-term commitment by the federal government to increasing public safety in Baltimore's most dangerous neighborhoods.

"The next step would be to advocate for additional federal appropriations to support expanded police protection for anti-drug activists who are living in neighborhoods disproportionately burdened by the drug plague," he said.

Finally, Congressman Cummings said he plans to develop bipartisan legislation that would increase support for community-based security measures against drug-related violence.

Congressman Cummings Presents \$100,000 Grant to Fayette Street Outreach, Inc. to Build Neighborhood Community Center

On October 30, Congressman Cummings presented a \$100,000 federal grant to Fayette Street Outreach, Inc., a Baltimore-based community organization in an effort to create a safe neighborhood center for families. The event was held at the Bons Secours Family Center in Baltimore.

Edna Manns, President of Fayette Street Outreach, said the funding will be used to transform a building located at 27 N. Smallwood Street into a center that will house an after-school program and a senior center. Another area of the building will be used as an office space for a resource center that provides referrals to health care, housing, childcare and legal representation services.

"It is essential that all of us realize the true neighborhood heroes like Edna Manns and her neighbors in Fayette Street Outreach are working hard every day to uplift the people of our community," Congressman Cummings observed. "That is why I am so pleased that, working together, we were able to support their outreach with this federal award."

Overwhelmed with emotion, Manns expressed her gratitude and described the importance of the federal grant.

"This means a new beginning for our community," Manns said. "This project will finally give children and senior citizens in our neighborhood a safe place to call their own."

Representatives from Carver Vocational Technical High School also attended the check presentation. Students from Carver will play a key role in the restoration and rehabilitation project.

The federal grant is funded through the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

EDI provides funds for rehabilitation projects and for other economic development activities that are uplifting neighborhoods across the United States.

Congressman Cummings to Host Sixth Annual "How to Pay for College" Seminar

Congressman Cummings will host his Sixth Annual "How to Pay for College" Seminar at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health's East Wing Auditorium on Monday, November 18, 2002, from 5 to 7:30 p.m.

Students and parents will receive a wide variety of important information about the college application process, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities. Representatives from nearly 40 colleges and universities, financial institutions, and government agencies will be on hand to offer their expertise.

Some of the participants include Johns Hopkins University; Morgan State University; Coppin State College; Towson University; University of Maryland; U.S. Coast Guard Academy;

United States Naval Academy; and Maryland Educational Opportunity Center

"This seminar is an excellent opportunity for parents and students to learn about the various financial resources available to help pay for college," Congressman Cummings noted. "Rising tuition costs and cuts in higher education budgets should not keep anyone from obtaining a college education."

For more information, please call (410) 496-2010.

Congressman Cummings Applauds \$6 Million Federal Grant for Joint Hopkins-Morgan Center for Health Disparities Solution

As a strong advocate of eliminating healthcare disparities, Congressman Cummings applauded a \$6 million federal grant awarded to Morgan State University and The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to build a new joint Center for Health Disparities Solutions.

Provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)'s National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, the grant will help Morgan and Johns Hopkins to create a center that will extensively examine the concerns of health disparities. The center will also be dedicated to finding more effective public health responses to this critical public health challenge.

"I want to congratulate Morgan State and Johns Hopkins, and I commend the foresight of NIH, Dr. John Ruffin and my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in creating and funding this strong and promising research partnership," Congressman Cummings, the CBC's First Vice-Chair, declared. "We have a moral duty to do everything within our power to improve the appalling state of minority health in the United States."

Principal Investigators for the Center will be Dorothy Browne, PhD, professor of public health and director of the Prevention Sciences Research Center/Drug Abuse Research Program at Morgan State University and Thomas A LaVeist, PhD, associate professor of health policy and management at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Programs at Morgan State University that will be involved with the new center include the Drug Abuse Research Program of the Prevention Sciences Research Center; the Public Health Program; the Programs in Social Work and Psychology; and the School of Computer, Mathematical, & Natural Sciences.

Johns Hopkins facilities involved in the Center include The Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center; Health Services Research and Development Center; Welch Center for Prevention, Urban Health Institute; and the Biostatistics Center.